

**RULES**  
**OF THE**  
**RUGBY UNION**  
**GAME**  
**OF**  
**FOOTBALL.**

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**AS ADOPTED BY THE CANADIAN RUGBY FOOTBALL  
UNION, SEPTEMBER 14th, 1880.**

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1. The Grounds shall be, as near as possible, 100 yards long by 50 yards broad.
2. Each Goal shall be composed of two upright posts placed 18 feet 6 inches apart, with cross-bar 10 feet from the ground.
3. A Drop Kick or Drop is made by letting the ball fall from the hands, and kicking it the *very instant* it rises.

4. A Place Kick or Place is made by kicking the ball after it has been placed in a nick made in the ground for the purpose of keeping it at rest.

5. A Punt is made by letting the ball fall from the hands and kicking it *before* it touches the ground.

6. A Goal can be obtained by kicking the ball from the field of play direct (*i.e.*, without touching the ground, or the dress or person of any player of either side) over the cross-bar of the opponents' goal, whether it touch such cross-bar or posts or not; but if the ball goes directly over either of the posts it is called a *poster*, and is not a goal.

7. A goal may be obtained by any kind of a kick except a *punt*.

8. A match shall be decided by a majority of goals; but if the number of goals be equal, or no goal be kicked, by a majority of tries; if no goal be kicked or try obtained, the match shall be drawn against that side which has been compelled to touch the ball down behind his own goal line the greater number of times.

9. The ball is *dead* when it rests absolutely motionless on the ground.

10. A Touch Down is when a player, putting his hand upon the ball on the ground in goal, stops it so that it remains dead.

11. A Tackle is when the holder of the ball is held by one or more players of the opposite side.

12. A Scrimmage takes place when the holder of the ball, being in the field of play, puts it down, at his own convenience, on the ground in front of him, and all who have closed round on their respective sides endeavour to push their opponents back, and drive the ball in the direction of the opposite goal line.

13. A player may *take up* the ball whenever it is rolling or bounding, except in a scrimmage.

14. It is not lawful to take up the ball when dead (except in order to bring it out after it has been touched down in touch or in goal) for any purpose whatever; whenever the ball shall have been so unlawfully taken up, it shall at once be brought back to where it was so taken up, and there put down.

15. In a scrimmage it is not lawful for any man to pick out the ball, or to touch it with the hand, under any circumstances whatever.

16. It is lawful for any player who has the ball to run with it. It is not lawful to carry the ball by the string.

17. It is lawful to *run in anywhere* across the goal line.

18. The goal line is in goal, and the touch line in touch.

19. In the event of any player holding or running with the ball being tackled, and the ball fairly held, he must at once cry *down*, and there put it down.

20. A Maul in Goal is when the holder of the ball is tackled inside goal line, or, being tackled immediately outside, is carried or pushed across it, and he, or

the opposite side, or both, endeavour to touch the ball down. In all cases, when so touched down, the ball shall belong to the players of the side who first had possession of it before the maul commenced, unless the opposite side have gained complete possession of it.

21. In case of a *maul in goal*, those players only who are touching the ball with their hands when it crosses the goal line may continue the maul in goal, and when a player has once released his hold of the ball after it is inside the goal line he may not again join in the maul, and if he attempts to do so may be dragged out by the opposite side.

22. But, if a player when *running in* is tackled inside the goal line, then only the player who first tackled him, or if two or more tackle simultaneously, they only may join in the maul. A maul in goal must not last longer than two minutes, the ball belonging to him who had first possession of it.

23. *Touch in Goal*. Immediately the ball, whether in the hands of a player (except for the purpose of a *punt out*—see Rule 31) or not, goes into touch in goal, it is at once *dead* and out of the game, and must be brought out as provided by Rules 42 and 43.

24. Every player is *on side*, but is put *off side* if he enters a scrum from his opponent's side, or, being in a scrum, gets in front of the ball, or when the ball has been kicked, touched, or is being run with by any of his own side behind him (*i. e.*, between himself and his goal line). No player can be off side in his own goal.

25. Every player when *off side* is out of the game, and shall not touch the ball in any case whatever,



either in or out of touch or goal, or in any way interrupt or obstruct any player until he is again *on side*.

26. If a player purposely foul an opponent in order to gain ground for his own side, the opponent's side may either have the ball down where the foul was made, or take a free kick, which free kick cannot possibly score a goal. The purpose of the foul must be decided by the referee.

27. A player being *off side* is put *on side* when the ball has been kicked, or run with five yards by any player of the opposite side, or when one of his own side has run in front of him, either with the ball or having kicked it when behind him. When a player has the ball, none of his opponents who at the time are *off side* may attempt to tackle, or otherwise interrupt such player till he has run five yards.

28. Throwing Back. It is lawful for any player who has the ball to throw it back towards his own goal, or to pass it back to any player of his own side who is at the time behind him.

29. Knocking on, *i. e.*, *deliberately* hitting the ball with the hand and Throwing Forward, *i. e.*, throwing the ball in the direction of the opponents' goal line, are not lawful. If the ball be either *knocked on* or *thrown forward*, the Captain of the opposite side may (unless a fair catch has been made, as provided by the next Rule) require to have it brought back to the spot where it was *knocked* or *thrown on*, and there put down.

30. A Fair Catch is a catch made direct from a kick, or a *throw forward*, or a *knock on* by one of the opposite side, or from a *punt out* (see Rule 31), provided

the catcher makes a mark with his heel at the spot where he has made the catch, and no other of his own side touch the ball (see Rules 44 and 45).

31. A *Punt out* is a *punt* made after a touch down by a player from behind his opponents' goal line, and from touch in goal if necessary, towards his own side, who must stand *outside* the goal line and endeavour to make a fair catch, or get the ball and *run in* or *drop* a goal (see Rules 49, 50 and 51).

32. A *Punt on* is a *punt* made in a manner similar to a *punt out*, and from touch if necessary, by a player who has made a fair catch from a *punt out* or another *punt on*.

33. *Touch*. If a ball goes into *touch*, the first player on his side who touches it down must bring it to the spot where it crossed the touch line; or if a player, when running with the ball, cross or put any part of either foot across the touch line, he must return with the ball to the spot where the line was so crossed, and thence return it into the field of play in one of the modes provided by the following Rule :—

34. He must then himself or by one of his own side, either, (i.) *bound* the ball in the field of play at right angles to the touch line, and then run with it, kick it, or throw it back to his own side; or (ii.) throw it out at right angles to the touch line; or (iii.) walk out with it at right angles to the touch line, any distance not less than *five* nor more than *fifteen* yards, and there put it down, first declaring how far he intends to walk out.

35. If two or more players holding the ball are pushed into *touch*, the ball shall belong *in touch* to the

player who first had hold of it in the field of play, and has not released his hold of it.

36. If the ball when thrown out of *touch* be not thrown out at right angles to the touch line, the Captain of either side may at once claim to have it thrown out again.

37. A catch made when the ball is thrown out of touch is not a *fair catch*.

38. A Kick off is a place *kick* from the centre of the field of play, and cannot count as a goal. The opposite side must stand at least *ten yards* in front of the ball until it has been kicked.

39. The ball shall be *kicked off*, (i.) at the commencement of the game ; (ii.) after a goal has been obtained ; and (iii.) after change of goals.

40. The Captains of the respective sides shall toss up before the commencement of the Match ; the winner of the toss shall have the option of the choice of Goal, or of kick off. They shall also arrange the time of play.

41. Whenever a Goal shall have been obtained, the side which has lost the Goal shall then kick off.

42. *Kick out* is a drop kick by one of the players of the side which has had to touch the Ball down in their own goal, or into whose touch in goal the ball has gone, (Rule 23) and is the mode of bringing the ball again into play, and cannot count as goal.

43. *Kick out* must be a *drop kick*, and from not more than *twenty-five yards* outside the kicker's goal ; if the ball, when kicked out, pitch in touch, it must be taken

back and kicked out again. The kicker's side must be behind the ball when kicked out.

44. A player who has made and claimed a *fair catch* shall thereupon either take a *drop kick* or *punt*, or *place* the ball for a place kick.

45. After a *fair catch* has been made, the opposite side may come up to the catcher's mark, and (except in cases under Rule 50) the catcher's side retiring, the ball shall be kicked from such mark, or from a spot any distance behind it.

46. A player may touch the ball down in his own goal at any time.

47. A side having touched the ball down in their opponents' goal, shall *try at goal* either by a *place kick* or a *punt out*.

48. If a *try at goal* be made by a *place kick*, a player of the side which has touched the ball down shall bring it up to the goal line in a straight line from and opposite to the spot where the ball was touched down, and there make a mark on the goal line, and thence walk straight out with it at right angles to the goal line, to such distance as *as he thinks proper*, and there place it for another of his side to kick. The kicker's side must be behind the ball when it is kicked, and the opposite side must remain behind their goal line until the ball has been placed on the ground.

49. If the *try at goal* be by a *punt out* (see Rule 31) a player of the side which has touched the ball down shall bring it straight up to the goal line opposite to the spot where it was touched down, and there make a mark on the Goal line, and then *punt out* from

touch in goal, if necessary, or from any part behind the goal line not nearer to the goal post than such mark, beyond which mark it is not lawful for the opposite side (who must keep behind their goal line) to pass until the ball has been kicked. (See Rules 54 and 55.)

50. If a *fair catch* be made from a *punt out* or a *punt on* the catcher may either proceed as provided by Rules 45 and 49, or himself take a *punt on*, in which case the mark made on making the *fair catch* shall be regarded (for the purpose of determining as well the position of the player who makes the *punt on* as of the other players of both sides) as the mark made on the Goal line in the case of a *punt out*.

51. A catch made in touch from a *punt out* or a *punt on* is not a fair catch; the ball must then be taken or thrown out of touch as provided by Rule 33; but if the catch be made in touch in Goal, the ball is at once dead, and must be *kicked out*, as provided by Rules 42 and 43.

52. When the ball has been touched down in the opponents' Goal, none of the side in whose Goal it has been so touched down shall touch it, or in any way displace it, or interfere with the player of the other side who may be taking it up or not.

53. The ball is *dead* whenever a Goal has been obtained; but if a *try at Goal* be not successful, the kick shall be considered as only an ordinary kick in the course of the game.

54. Charging, *i.e.*, rushing forward to kick the ball, or tackle a player, is lawful for the opposite side in all cases of a *place kick* after a *fair catch*, or upon a *try at*

*Goal*, immediately the ball touches, or is placed on the ground ; and in cases of a *drop kick* or *punt* after a *fair catch*, as soon as the player having the ball commences to run or offers to kick, or the ball has touched the ground : but he may always draw back, and unless he has dropped the ball, or actually touched it with his foot, they must again retire to his mark (see Rule 48). The opposite side in the case of a *punt out* or a *punt on*, and the kicker's side in *all* cases may not *charge* until the ball has been kicked.

55. If a player having a ball, when about to *punt it out*, goes outside the goal line, or when about to *punt on*, advances nearer to his own goal line than his mark, made on making the fair catch, or if, after the ball has been touched down in the opponents' goal, or a fair catch has been made, more than one player on the side which has so touched it down or made the fair catch, touch the ball before it is again kicked, the opposite side may *charge* at once.

56. In cases of a *fair catch* the opposite side may come up to and charge from anywhere on or behind a line drawn through the mark made by the player who has made the catch, and parallel to their own goal line ; but in the case of a *fair catch* from a *punt out* or a *punt on*, they may not advance further in the direction of the touch line nearest to such mark than a line drawn through such mark to their goal line, and parallel to such touch line. In all cases (except a *punt out* and a *punt on*) the kicker's side must be behind the ball when it is kicked, but may not charge until it has been kicked.

57. No HACKING or THROTTLING, or tipping up shall be allowed under any circumstances.

58. No one wearing projecting nails, iron plates, or gutta percha, on any part of his boots or shoes, shall be allowed to play in a match.

59. The Captains, unless umpires be appointed, shall be the sole arbiters of all disputes, and their decision shall be final. If the Captain of either side challenge the construction placed upon any rules, he shall have the right of appeal to the Rugby Union Committee.

60. Neither time nor on-side shall be called until the ball is fairly held, or goes out of play, and in the case of a try or fair catch, the kick at goal shall be allowed.

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